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Indonesia

BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR

International Religious Freedom Report 2010

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The constitution provides for freedom of religion. The government generally respected religious freedom for the six officially recognized religions; however, ongoing restrictions, particularly on religions not sanctioned by the government and sects of the recognized religions considered deviant, were exceptions.

The government prosecuted some individuals responsible for religiously tinged violence in Sulawesi and the Maluku. During the Muslim holy month of Ramadan, the government prevented several vigilante actions. However, it failed to prevent abuse and discrimination against religious groups by other private actors and at times failed to punish perpetrators of violence. Some hard-line Muslim groups opposed to religious pluralism engaged in violent activity against free religious expression, and various other activities deemed contradictory to their view of Islamic values. Members of minority religious groups continued to experience some official discrimination in the form of administrative difficulties, often in the context of civil registration of marriages and births, and/or the issuance of identity cards.

There were a number of reports of societal abuses or discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice. Some hard-line Muslim groups used violence and intimidation to close at least 28 churches. Some of the churches remained closed. Only a few perpetrators of these and past abuses have been prosecuted.

The U.S. government discusses religious freedom with government and civil society leaders as part of its overall policy to promote human rights, including sponsorship of the Indonesia-U.S. Interfaith Dialogue in Jakarta. The embassy promotes religious freedom and tolerance through exchanges and civil society development programs.

Section I. Religious Demography

An archipelago of more than 17,000 islands, the country has an area of approximately 700,000 square miles and a population of 238 million.

According to a 2000 census report, 88 percent of the population is Muslim, 6 percent Protestant, 3 percent Roman Catholic, and 2 percent Hindu. Other religions (Buddhist, followers of traditional indigenous religions, Jewish, and other Christian denominations) are less than 1 percent of the population. Some Christians, Hindus, and members of other minority religious groups say that the census undercounted non-Muslims. The government conducted a national census in 2010 that will provide more accurate figures.

Most Muslims in the country are Sunni. The two largest Muslim social organizations, Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, claimed 40 million and 30 million Sunni followers, respectively. There are also an estimated one million to three million Shi'a Muslims.

Many smaller Muslim organizations exist, including approximately 400,000 persons who subscribe to the Ahmadiyya Qadiyani interpretation of Islam. A smaller group, known as Ahmadiyya Lahore, is also present. Other small Islamic minorities include al-Qiyadah al-Islamiya, Darul Arqam, Jamaah Salamulla (Salamulla Congregation), and members of the Indonesian Islamic Propagation Institute.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs estimates that 19 million Protestants (referred to locally as Christians) and eight million Catholics live in the country. The province of East Nusa Tenggara has the highest proportion of Catholics at 55 percent. The province of Papua contains the highest proportion of Protestants at 58 percent. Other areas, such as the Maluku Islands and North Sulawesi, host sizable Christian communities.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs estimates that 10 million Hindus live in the country, and account for approximately 90 percent of the population in Bali. Hindu minorities also reside in Central and East Kalimantan, the city of Medan (North Sumatra), South and Central Sulawesi, and Lombok (West Nusa Tenggara). Hindu groups such as Hare Krishna and followers of the Indian spiritual leader Sai Baba are present in smaller numbers. Some indigenous religious groups, including the "Naurus" on Seram Island in Maluku Province, incorporate Hindu and animist beliefs, and many have also adopted some Protestant teachings.

The country has a small Sikh population, estimated at between 10,000 and 15,000, residing primarily in Medan and Jakarta. Eight Sikh gurudwaras (temples) are located in North Sumatra and two in Jakarta.

Among Buddhists approximately 60 percent follow the Mahayana school, Theravada followers account for 30 percent, and the remaining 10 percent are spread between the Tantrayana, Tridharma, Kasogatan, Nichiren, and Maitreya schools. According to the Young Generation of Indonesian Buddhists, most believers live in Java, Bali, Lampung, West Kalimantan, and the Riau islands. An estimated 60 percent of Buddhists are ethnic Chinese.

The number of Confucians remains unknown because respondents were not allowed to identify themselves as Confucian in the 2000 national census. The Supreme Council for Confucian Religion in Indonesia estimated that 95 percent of Confucians are ethnic Chinese and the balance are mostly indigenous Javanese. Many Confucians also practiced Buddhism and Christianity.

An estimated 20 million persons, primarily in Java, Kalimantan, and Papua practice animism and other types of traditional belief systems termed "Aliran Kepercayaan." Many combine their beliefs with one of the government-recognized religions and register under that recognized religion. The National Commission for Human Rights states there are 244 organizations of traditional/indigenous belief at the national level with 954 chapters nationwide across 25 provinces.

There are small Jewish communities in Jakarta and Surabaya. The Baha'i community reported thousands of members, but no reliable figures are available. Falun Dafa, which considers itself a spiritual organization rather than a religion, claims between 2,000 and 3,000 followers, nearly half of whom live in Yogyakarta, Bali, and Medan.

Section II. Status of Government Respect for Religious Freedom

Legal/Policy Framework

The constitution provides for freedom of religion, accords "all persons the right to worship according to their own religion or belief," and states that "the nation is based upon belief in one supreme God." The first tenet of the country's national

ideology, Pancasila, similarly declares belief in one God. The government does not allow for not believing in God. Government employees must swear allegiance to the nation and to the Pancasila ideology. Other laws and policies placed restrictions on certain types of religious activity, particularly among unrecognized religious groups and "deviant" sects of recognized religious groups. The central government did not invoke its constitutional authority to review or revoke local laws that violated freedom of religion.

Aceh remained the only province authorized by the central government to implement Islamic law (Shari'a), and non-Muslims in the province remained exempt from Shari'a. Some local governments outside of Aceh also have laws with elements of Shari'a that abrogate certain rights of women and religious minorities. Aceh adopted a Shari'a based penal code imposing physical punishment for violations.

The Ministry of Religious Affairs extends official status to six religious groups: Islam, Catholicism, Protestantism, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism. Unrecognized groups may register with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism as social organizations. Although these groups have the right to establish a house of worship, obtain identity cards, and register marriages and births, they sometimes face administrative difficulties in doing so. In some cases these challenges make it more difficult for individuals to find jobs or enroll children in school. Legally, identity card applications are now acceptable when the "religion" section is left blank; however, members of some groups reported that they sometimes faced obstacles.

The government permits the practice of the traditional belief system of Aliran Kepercayaan as a cultural manifestation, not a religion. Aliran Kepercayaan groups must register with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and local authorities generally respect their right to practice their beliefs.

In 2008 the government issued a joint ministerial decree freezing certain activities of the Ahmadiyya Qadiyani (Ahmadiyya). Specifically, it bans proselytizing by the Ahmadiyya but also prohibits vigilantism against the group. Violation of the proselytizing ban carries a maximum five-year prison sentence on charges of blasphemy. The decree does not, however, prohibit the Ahmadiyya from worshipping or continuing to practice within its own community. Hardline groups and a government-appointed body, the Coordinating Board for Monitoring Mystical Beliefs in Society (Bakor Pakem), supported an outright ban.

On April 19, 2010, the Constitutional Court upheld the 1965 Blasphemy Law, holding that the government had power to impose limitations on religious freedoms based upon security considerations. Human rights groups, including the Wahid Institute, led the effort to overturn the law. Many Muslims and members of other religions supported maintaining the law.

The government established the Indonesian Council of Ulama (MUI) in 1975, and it has power to issue fatwas (religious decrees), although MUI opinions are not legally binding. Nevertheless, the MUI's edicts or fatwas were considered moral guiding principles for Muslims, and the government took them into consideration when making decisions or drafting legislation.

Numerous regional branches of the MUI have released fatwas on the issue of "deviance" from mainstream Islam, including recommendations to ban the Ahmadiyya. These have been influential in enabling continued official and social discrimination against the Ahmadiyya and other minority religious groups. The MUI did not issue any fatwas during the reporting period, although regional branches of MUI issued at least two fatwas. In an October 2009 fatwa, the East Java MUI found that the teachings of the "Santriloka" sect in Mojokerto deviated from Islam. Santriloka teachings claim that some parts of the Qur'an are considered heresy and condemn the Hajj.

The government requires officially recognized religious groups to comply with Ministry of Religious Affairs and other ministerial directives, such as the Revised Joint Ministerial Decree on the Construction of Houses of Worship (2006),

Overseas Aid to Religious Institutions in Indonesia (1978), and Guidelines for the Propagation of Religion (1978). Indigenous/traditional beliefs must register their organization with the Ministry of Tourism and Culture at the district or provincial level, which provides some legal status for the belief system.

The 2006 Revised Joint Ministerial Decree on the Construction of Houses of Worship requires religious groups that want to build a house of worship to obtain the signatures of at least 90 members of the group and 60 persons of other religious groups in the community stating that they support the construction. The decree also requires approval from the local religious affairs office, the Forum for Religious Harmony (FKUB). While the FKUB at times is a deterrent to construction, it has in some areas helped communities to foster positive communication between religious groups. For example, the FKUB in Solo has been actively involved in helping a church, GBIS Generasi Pilihan at Pucangsawit, Solo, to get their construction permit after several years of effort. FKUB approached the surrounding neighborhood of this church and were able to gain permission to build a church in their neighborhood.

The Guidelines for Overseas Aid to Religious Institutions require domestic religious organizations to obtain approval from the Ministry of Religion to receive funding from overseas donors. The Guidelines for Propagation of Religion ban proselytizing under most circumstances.

The Child Protection Act of 2002 makes conversion of minors to a religion other than their own through "tricks" and/or "lies" a crime punishable by up to five years in prison.

The criminal code makes spreading hatred, heresy, and blasphemy punishable by up to five years in prison. Although the law applies to all officially recognized religions, the few cases in which it has been enforced have almost always involved blasphemy and heresy against Islam.

Aceh remained the only province for which the central government specifically authorized Shari'a law. Presidential Decree 11/2003 formally implemented Shari'a law and established Shari'a courts in Aceh. Since that time the provincial government has passed three Shari'a laws, one governing relations between members of the opposite sex, and two others banning alcohol consumption and gambling. Christians and other non-Muslims are specifically exempted. Since 2007 Aceh overall has steadily reduced enforcement of Shari'a law. However, officials in West Aceh have expanded the numbers of Shari'a police, particularly after the Head of District (Bupati) Ramli issued a regulation in October 2009 against women wearing pants considered too tight. Police regularly conducted raids and required women not meeting the standard to change their attire.

The penalty for more serious violations of Shari'a law can include caning. Persons subject to caning in Aceh are fully clothed--sometimes with several layers of clothes. There are also regulations effectively limiting the amount of force that may be applied during a caning. Acehnese canings do not break the skin.

Although not specifically classified as Shari'a ordinances, many local governments follow Shari'a as the inspiration for their ordinances. According to the Indonesian Women's Coalition, local governments have issued at least 100 such ordinances. Although these regulations are only sporadically enforced and apply only to Muslims, many Muslim scholars and human rights activists claim that these ordinances create or increase discrimination against women. In some cases these laws require Muslim women to wear headscarves in public and prevent Muslim women from receiving government services if they are not wearing headscarves. Regulations also mandate elected Muslim officials, students, civil servants, and individuals seeking marriage licenses to be able to read the Qur'an in Arabic; and prohibit Muslims from consuming alcohol and gambling. Some of these laws are attempts to deal with local social problems. In many cases the local laws are not enforced.

Civil rights activists assert that Shari'a-based ordinances violate the constitution and have called on the government to exercise its constitutional jurisdiction to revoke or review these ordinances.

A 2002 regulation in the Pamekasan Regency of Madura, called the Gerbang Salamor Islamic Society Development Movement, urged Muslim civil servants to wear Islamic attire and cease both public and work activities during the call to prayer. The regulation was issued following requests from the Pamekasan clerics to encourage Muslims to implement Islamic values in daily life. There are no clear sanctions for noncompliance and the regulation is largely considered a moral guideline.

On January 9, 2010, Albayyinat released a book titled *Export of Sikh Revolution to Indonesia* in Surabaya written by Habib Achmad Zein Alkaf, member of the edict commission of the East Java MUI and member of the East Java Nahdlatul Ulama board. The edict commission is an official body responsible for drafting and reviewing religious edicts. This book was aimed at warning people of the danger of the Sikh (Ahlul Bait) religion.

The 1974 Marriage Law makes polygamy illegal for civil servants, except in limited circumstances. The marriage law for Muslims draws from Shari'a and allows a man to have up to four wives, provided he is able to support each equally. For a man to take a second, third, or fourth wife, he must obtain court permission and the consent of the first wife; however, these conditions are not always required in practice. Many women reportedly encounter societal pressures that make permission difficult to refuse, Islamic women's groups remain divided over whether the system needs revision. In October 2007 the Constitutional Court upheld a spouse's right to deny a husband's demand to take on additional wives, ruling that restrictions on polygamy in the Marriage Law violate neither the constitution nor tenets of Islam and are necessary to protect the rights of women.

The president signed antipornography legislation into law in December 2008. The law outlaws pornographic acts and images, defining pornography as "man-made sexual materials in the form of drawings, sketches, illustrations, photographs, text, voice, sound, moving pictures, animation, cartoons, poetry, conversations, and gestures." It also outlaws public performances which could "incite sexual desire." Some provinces refused to implement the law on grounds that it limits religious and cultural expression. On March 25 the Constitutional Court held the antipornography bill did not violate the constitution.

Divorce remains a legal option available to members of all religions, but Muslims seeking divorce generally must use the Islam-based family court system while non-Muslims use the national court system. In divorce cases women often bore a heavier evidentiary burden than men, especially in the Islam-based family court system. The law requires the former husband to provide alimony or its equivalent, but no enforcement mechanism exists, and divorced women rarely receive such support.

The government exercises exclusive control over organizing the Hajj pilgrimage to Mecca. The Ministry of Religious Affairs provides guidance, service, and protection to Hajj pilgrims during their pilgrimage and determines the costs associated with the Hajj. There are frequent allegations of corruption, poor management, and inadequate service. An independent supervisory committee monitors Hajj management.

Under the National Education Law, religious instruction in any one of the six official religions is required when requested by a student.

Religious speeches are permissible if delivered to members of the same religious group and are not intended to convert persons of other religious groups.

Televised religious programming is unrestricted for any of the recognized religious groups.

Publication of religious materials or the use of religious symbols is permitted; however, the government bans dissemination of these materials to persons of other religious groups.

Religious groups and social organizations must obtain permits to hold religious concerts or other public events. The government usually grants permits in an unbiased manner unless a concern exists that the activity would raise strong objections from members of another religious group in the area.

Foreign religious workers must obtain religious worker visas, and foreign religious organizations must obtain permission from the Ministry of Religious Affairs to provide any type of assistance (in-kind, personnel, or financial) to local religious groups.

The law does not discriminate against any recognized religious group in employment, housing, or health care.

The government observes the following religious holidays as national holidays: the Ascension of the Prophet, Eid al-Fitr, Eid al-Adha, the Muslim New Year, Good Friday, the Ascension of Christ, the Birth of the Prophet Muhammad, Christmas, the Buddhist holiday Waisak, the Chinese New Year, and the Hindu holiday Nyepi. Additional Hindu holy days are recognized as regional holidays in Bali, and the Balinese do not work on Saraswati Day, Galungan, and Kuningan.

During the reporting period, several government officials and prominent political leaders interacted in public forums and seminars with religious leaders and interfaith groups such as Muhammadiyah's International Peace Forum and various seminars sponsored by local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs).

Restrictions on Religious Freedom

The government generally respected religious freedom; however, a government decree restricting the ability of the Ahmadiyya to practice freely was a significant exception. Certain other laws, policies, and official actions also restricted religious freedom and the government sometimes failed to prevent discrimination by individuals against and abuse of others based on their religious belief.

Local governments issued bans against Ahmadiyya, al-Qiyadah al-Islamiyah, and other minority Islamic sects during the reporting period and monitored them closely, frequently at the request of local MUI chapters.

On April 2, 2010, district officials in Parung, Bogor issued a letter canceling Easter Services at the Santo Johannes Baptista Church. Local opponents also continued pressure on local leaders to block construction of a church building.

Authorities shut Radio Erabaru, a radio station affiliated with the Sound of Hope network and the Falun Gong movement on March 23, 2010. Authorities justified the closure by stating that the station did not have the necessary permit, a claim disputed by station management. The station resumed broadcasting using backup equipment while the Supreme Court reviewed the case. At the end of the reporting period, the radio station continued to broadcast.

The Batak Protestant Church at Pondok Timur was threatened with closure by local authorities in January 2010. The Tambun Batak Protestant Church in Bekasi was targeted by members of radical groups on Christmas Day 2009 and was later closed by local authorities. The Pasundan Christian Church, and the Indonesian Christian Church (GKI) both located in Ciranjang, Cianjur, West Java, continued to face delays in decisions on their respective applications for building permits for a church.

The HKBP church in Karawang, West Java was closed by police on January 24, 2010, following protests and pressure by members of radical Muslim organizations. At the end of the reporting period, the church continued to hold services with the authorization of the local government.

The East Java MUI issued an edict on October 28, 2009, accusing the Santriloka sect in Mojokerto, East Java of heresy. Santriloka's leader, Ahmad Nafan, stated that Muslims did not need to fast during Ramadan, de-emphasized the need for prayer, and believed that the Qur'an was originally written in Sanskrit and old Javanese. On October 30 locals from Mojokerto gathered in front of Ahmad Nafan's house and demanded that he stop his activities. The police closed Santriloka's activity center and took Nafan into custody. On November 2, 2009, Nafan apologized for his activities and said that the Santriloka would return to Islam. In spite of his statement, on November 5, 2009, police charged Nafan with blasphemy. No further information on the case was available at the end of the reporting period.

In October 2009 residents in Ringinpitu Village in Tulungagung regency of East Java accused nine families in the small Baha'i community of spreading "new" religion. The Tulungagung Prosecutors Office questioned three of the Baha'i followers on October 26, 2009.

On October 10, 2009, hundreds of people, including some religious leaders from Karang Gayam Village of Sampang (Madura) went to the local police precinct to seek action against persons following "Tajul Muluk" teachings. They claimed the teachings blasphemed Islam for asserting that the Qur'an has been modified. No further information was available on this case at the end of the reporting period.

The civil registration system discriminated against persons who do not belong to one of the six recognized religious groups. Animists, Baha'i, and members of other small minority religious groups sometimes found it difficult to register births or marriages, notwithstanding the June 2007 regulation pertaining to marriage and civil administration, which allowed Aliran Kepercayaan marriages to be officially recognized. According to the Trimulya Foundation, an NGO that advocates for rights of Aliran Kepercayaan followers, adherents were sometimes unable to register marriages.

Interreligious couples also continued to face obstacles to marrying and officially registering their marriages and often had difficulty finding clergy to perform the ceremony as required before registering a marriage. As a result some couples traveled outside the country to marry and then registered the marriage at an embassy. Despite being among the officially recognized religious groups, Hindus stated that they frequently had to travel long distances to have their marriages registered, because in many rural areas, the local government could not or would not perform the registration.

In practice couples prevented from registering their marriage or the birth of a child sometimes converted to one of the recognized religions or misrepresented themselves as belonging to one of the six religions. Those who chose not to register their marriages or births risked future difficulties, such as an inability to obtain birth certificates for children, which were required for school enrollment, scholarships, and government employment.

Human rights groups continued to receive occasional reports of local civil registry officials who rejected applications for identity cards (KTPs) submitted by members of unrecognized or minority religious groups. While civil registry regulations allowed the religion field to be left blank, there were reports of individual officials that did not follow this regulation. Some applicants found it easier to register with a religion other than their own and were issued KTPs that inaccurately reflected their religion. For example, some animists received KTPs that listed their religion as Islam. Many Sikhs were registered as Hindu on their KTPs and marriage certificates. Similarly, some Jews registered as Christians. Some citizens without a KTP had difficulty finding work. Several NGOs and religious advocacy groups continued to urge the government to delete the religion category from the KTPs, but no progress was made.

While local FKUBs are designed to serve in part as interfaith forums or arbiters, they were often dominated by the majority religious group, which could oppose or stall provision of licenses to minority groups. In several cases in West Java, small churches faced difficulties obtaining licenses, frequently due to opposition in the FKUB.

In 2007 the local government cancelled the permit for the construction of a Hindu temple in Pura Penataran Agung Rinjani, Bayan District, West Lombok. Officials claimed the temple administrator was building a new and larger temple instead of renovating the existing one as requested in the permit. The construction was stopped when it reached 25 percent of completion. Construction was still suspended, and no new permit request was submitted during the reporting period. The temple was still being used for religious services.

In 2008 hundreds of protesters from the majority-Muslim Sasak community attacked a Hindu temple in Pura Sangkareang, Keru, West Lombok, causing minor damage and halting renovations. Although the police made some arrests, the protesters were released shortly thereafter. Citing differing interpretations on building permits, some local officials believed the temple administrators required a permit and agreement from the local community prior to beginning renovation work. Temple administrators assumed that renovations, unlike construction, could proceed without approval from municipal authorities and local residents. During the reporting period, Hindu communities stopped using the temple for religious purposes, due to threats from unidentified groups.

In Aceh Shari'a police continued to monitor compliance with Shari'a regulations, although the level of police activity varied between districts. Province-wide, the budget for the Shari'a police has been reduced from \$41 million to \$22 million (37 billion rupiah to 20 billion rupiah). Efforts to educate the public about and enforce Shari'a continued, albeit at much lower intensity than in the past.

During the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, many local governments ordered either the closure or a reduction in operating hours of various entertainment establishments. Several regional governments issued circulars limiting the operating hours of night entertainment venues, cafes, and restaurants during the month of Ramadan. Some of the restaurants chose to close voluntarily while others, if not serving food acceptable to Muslims, remained open, often posting a sign that the business was not Muslim-owned.

Surabaya city government officials, social leaders, religious leaders, and business leaders signed a joint agreement not to operate nighttime entertainment during the fasting month. Similar regulations were applied in Jakarta and other parts of the country. Regional governments, city administrations, and hardline groups sometimes employed force in administering these regulations, although in many cases police prevented vigilante groups from taking action. There were 12 regencies and cities in East Java that issued a regulation/circular letter ordering the closure or a reduction in operating hours of various entertainment venues during Ramadan.

On August 16, 2009, Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia held a demonstration in Surabaya demanding that prostitutes cease their activities during the month of Ramadan. Nahdlatul Ulama's youth wing deployed more than 3,000 personnel to inspect entertainment centers in Sidoarjo, East Java, for conduct of activities considered offensive to Islam. On September 12, 2009, a dozen students from the Indonesian Muslim Student Movement demanded the Garden Palace Hotel's discotheque cease operations during Ramadan.

Between June and December 2009, local authorities prohibited the Baptist Christian Church of Jakarta in Tangerang, Banten, from conducting Sunday services on their property. This was allegedly in response to pressure from radical groups.

In June 2009 the Batak Christian Protestant Church (HKBP) in Jakabaring, Palembang, South Sumatra, was forced by local authorities to cease services. The Islamic Believers Forum (FUI) claimed that the surrounding communities, FKUB, and local government never gave the church permission for construction. The planned location for the church was in the center of a Muslim-majority community, and church officials continued in their application with the local government to obtain a construction permit.

The HKBP church in Parung Panjang, Bogor, West Java, was closed by local government officials on July 21, 2009. The church authorities brought their case to the National Commission on Human Rights the following day.

Christian groups stated that foreign religious workers found it difficult to obtain or extend visas. Requirements for religious worker visas were more onerous than other visa categories. The application required approval from both local and national offices within the Department of Religion, and disclosure of the number of followers of the religion in the community. The applicants must attest they would remain in their position no more than two years before being replaced by a local national. Foreigners granted such visas worked relatively unimpeded. Faith-based workers with a primary focus on development work often successfully registered for social visas with the Ministry of Health or the Ministry of Education.

Abuses of Religious Freedom

NGOs that monitor religious freedom violations in the country recorded over 200 incidents during the reporting period. The highest number of reported incidents occurred in West Java and Jakarta. During the reporting period, the government continued explicitly and implicitly to restrict the religious freedom of groups associated with forms of Islam viewed as outside the mainstream.

Members of radical groups attacked a Catholic secondary school, Saint Bellarminus in Jatibening, Bekasi, on May 7, 2010. Protesters claimed they were reacting to a student's anti-Islamic Internet posting. The 16-year old student faced charges of blasphemy, with a maximum penalty of two years of imprisonment.

The government tolerated discrimination and abuse toward the Ahmadiyya by continued failure to reject the 2007 MUI fatwa condemning Islamic groups such as the Ahmadiyya. The government also failed to reject the 2005 MUI fatwa that explicitly banned the Ahmadiyya, as well as related local government bans. Authorities failed to halt or investigate vandalism on a number of Ahmadiyya facilities during the reporting period. Varying reports provided different numbers of mosques attacked or closed.

Some Ahmadiyya followers remained as internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Transito Camp in Mataram, Lombok, where they have lived since 2006 after a mob forced them from their homes. Without a home address, most continued to have difficulty obtaining KTPs and, consequently, were sometimes denied free health services from hospitals. The Ahmadiyya IDPs were also not registered as voters for local elections. The IDP families requested government assistance in returning to their homes; however, most continue to fear for their safety if they returned. On March 8, 2010, Lombok government officials told Ahmadiyya representatives that the IDPs remaining in the camp could not return to their village unless they first renounced their Ahmadiyya beliefs.

Camp conditions remained difficult, with cramped living space and limited access to water. Although children have attended local schools since 2006, they have faced harassment. In July 2009 Ahmadiyya IDPs requested compensation for their assets from local administration, but the claim was still pending at the end of the reporting period. During the reporting period, despite the absence of a clear decision on their status and official permission to return home, 12 Ahmadiyya families have returned to their home village in Ketapang. However, they continue to move between Transito Camp and Ketapang Village, spending a few days or weeks at each, because at times they feared for their safety in Ketapang. However, the remaining 19 families in the the camp continued to be worried for their safety in Ketapang. Ahmadiyya IDPs no longer received a rice subsidy, water, or electricity supplied by the local government. Local officials refused to issue an identification card (KTP) for Ahmadiyyah followers due to the lack of a decision on their status. The lack of a KTP also prevented them from receiving health care.

In addition to the Ahmadiyya, blasphemy laws were used against other groups claiming ties to Islam but considered "deviant."

On June 2, 2009, the Central Jakarta District Court found Lia Eden, the leader of the Jamaah Alamulla Group, guilty of blasphemy and incitement of hatred among religious adherents for proselytizing and delivering her messages to government institutions, including the Presidential Palace. Lia Eden was sentenced to two years and six months in prison. Eden's follower, Wahyu Wibisono, was sentenced to two years in prison for writing and publicizing Eden's religious beliefs. Eden and 23 of her followers had been arrested in December 2008 on charges of blasphemy. This was the second time that Eden had been tried for blasphemy. She was sentenced in 2006 to two years in prison and released in October 2007 after serving 16 months. In November 2007 the Supreme Court also sentenced Abdul Rahman, Eden's son, who claimed to be the reincarnation of Prophet Muhammad, to three years in prison.

The government also has pursued numerous actions against al-Qa'ida al-Islamiyah followers. On May 2, 2008, the Padang District Court sentenced two local activists, Dedi Priadi and Gerry Lufthi Yudistira, to three years in prison for blasphemy. On April 23, 2008, the South Jakarta District Court sentenced leader Ahmad Moshaddeq to four years in prison for blasphemy, on charges of claiming to be a prophet.

Other non-Islamic sects were also targets of government action. On June 3, 2009, the Kupang District Police in East Nusa Tenggara arrested the leader of the Sion City of Allah sect and 12 of his followers for blasphemy. The sect was led by Nimbrot Lasbuan, a self-proclaimed prophet. The sect, whose teaching was based on the book of Jeremiah, banned its followers from joining other church services on Sunday. It also rejected participating in Holy Communion and wedding ceremonies conducted by the Timor Evangelical Church (GMIT). On November 3, 2009, Kupang State Court sentenced Nimbrot Lasbuan and his followers to six months in prison.

In February 2009 the Masohi District Court of Maluku began trials for two suspects charged with blasphemy and inciting a riot during a December 2008 mob incident. The incident involved 300 persons who burned two churches and dozens of homes belonging to both Christians and Muslims. The mob alleged that a Christian teacher, Wilhelmina Holle, made insulting remarks at a local primary school to her students about Islam and Muhammad. Holle and the other suspect, Asmara Wasahua, coordinator of the Central Maluku Islamic Communication Forum, were charged with provoking the attacks and circulating inflammatory pamphlets. On April 28, 2009, Masohi State Court sentenced Holle to one year in prison under the country's blasphemy law. The Masohi State Court also sentenced Wasahua to one year in prison for inciting the riot. Holle was released on December 10, 2009.

Forced Religious Conversion

There were no reports of forced religious conversion.

Improvements and Positive Developments in Respect for Religious Freedom

There were numerous areas of improvements in religious freedom during the reporting period. Representatives of the Confucian community continued to practice their religion freely as well as obtain marriage certificates and identity cards with Confucianism listed as their religion.

Local government officials in West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) recognized the marriages of Ahmadiyya followers. Officials from the NTB Department of Religion conducted weddings in the Ahmadiyya Transito Camp for Ahmadiyya couples and recorded and issued marriage certificates. Ahmadiyya followers experienced little or no difficulty registering their marriages or getting marriage certificates during the reporting period.

In Maluku, despite new incidents of violence during the reporting period, leaders of both the Muslim and Christian communities and the Maluku provincial government continued to demonstrate strong commitment to easing religious tension and rebuilding the community.

Maluku was the site of the "World Peace Gong" event on November 25, 2009, as part of the World Peace Day Celebration. The governor urged the Maluku people to express gratitude because their region had gone from a place of religious violence to peaceful cooperation. However, segregation between Muslims and Christians, as well as between different ethnicities, still existed as Muslim and Christian communities increasingly migrated toward separate residential areas. This growing segregation and decreasing communication between Christian and Muslim communities was seen as increasing the potential for future conflict.

Nahdlatul Ulama's Lakpesdam (Human Resources Development and Study Center) worked with Christian leaders, parliamentarians, local government officials, police, and the military to establish an "early warning system"--a forum to anticipate possible religious conflicts. Religious institutions developed scholarship programs that enabled members of their communities to study other religions; for example, Muslims students were able to attend Christian schools to study Christian theology.

Local governments continued to prosecute suspects involved in religiously-motivated violence during the Maluku conflict in past years. In July 2009 the Ambon State Court sentenced Wahyu (one name only), alias Rusli Ramdani, to two years in prison for possessing a weapon and ammunition.

On May 20, 2010, the Palu State Court prosecutor sought a 17-year prison sentence for Arifuddin Lako following his conviction for the murder of Ferry Silalahi, prosecutor in numerous terrorism and corruption cases in Poso in 2004--including one case involving the terrorist organization Jemaah Islamiyah. As of the end of the reporting period, the court had not yet sentenced Lako.

On January 27, 2010, police arrested Eko Budi Wardoyo in Sidoarjo (East Java), for alleged involvement in the 2005 bombing of the Central Market in Poso that killed 22 persons and injured more than 90 others in religiously tinged violence. Wardoyo also was accused of the murder of Christian Pastor Susianti Tinulele in 2004. At the end of the reporting period, the case was still pending.

Local police in Central Sulawesi protected local churches and prayer houses during religious services. Local residents expressed optimism that the cycle of violence has slowed. Citizens and religious leaders continued to promote peace and religious harmony in the province. Once the scene of extreme tension and sectarian violence, many consider Poso now a safe place to conduct public religious events. Christian and Muslim communities continued to hold joint events. Muslim communities participated in a large Christmas Festival in 2009, while Christian, Hindu, and Buddhist leaders attended the celebration of the birthday of Prophet Muhammad on February 26, 2010.

During Ramadan the number of vigilante attacks on entertainment venues decreased. During a peaceful Christmas season, Nahdlatul Ulama encouraged coexistence and tolerance of religious differences.

On February 2, 2010, the Bandung State Administrative Court ruled in favor of the Catholic Church of Saint Maria in Cinangka, Bungur Sari, overturning a decision by the government of Purwakarta, West Java, that had revoked the church's building permit.

In September 2009 the Bandung State Administrative Court also overturned an order by the mayor of Depok that had revoked a building permit granted to the Batak Protestant Christian Church (HKBP) in Depok. The church had already started construction when the mayor revoked the permit in March 2009, citing residential complaints. During construction there were also several unresolved attacks on the HKBP church.

Section III. Status of Societal Respect for Religious Freedom

There were reports of societal abuses or discrimination based on religious affiliation, belief, or practice.

Controversy over the Ahmadiyya continued throughout the reporting period. Hardline groups renewed attacks and demanded the government disband the Ahmadiyya. Rallies continued throughout the country both for and against a ban. Civil rights activists, members of the Presidential Advisory Council, and leaders from Muhammadiyah and Nadhlatul Ulama continued to assert that any such ban would be unconstitutional and contrary to the principles of Islam.

In addition to the Ahmadiyya, according to the Indonesian Communion of Churches and the Wahid Institute, local government officials and local communities forced the closing of at least 28 licensed and unlicensed churches during the reporting period. Many of the targeted churches operated in private homes and storefronts, and some churches moved their services to rented spaces in public shopping malls to lessen the potential of threats from hardline groups.

On April 27, 2010, a mob burned a building under construction in Cibereum, Cisarua, Bogor, West Java, that belonged to Penabur, a Christian educational organization. Protesters believed it was a church and destroyed the building.

Demonstrators targeted Santo Johannes Baptista Catholic Church in Parung, Bogor, West Java, on April 10, 2010, interrupting Good Friday services. The local government had not approved an application for construction of a structure on the property.

Unknown assailants burned the Java Christian Church in Sukorejo, Kendal, Central Java, on April 4, 2010.

Santa Maria Immaculata Catholic Church in Kali Deras, Jakarta, was under construction, with a permit, when demonstrators closed the access road to the site of the church on March 12, 2010. Construction remained halted at the end of the reporting period. While there has been a police investigation, there have been no further developments in this case.

The Western Indonesia Protestant Church (GPIB) "Galilea," located in Taman Galaxi, Bekasi, West Java, was attacked on February 15, 2010. After forcing closure of the church; however, the demonstrators flew their banners from the top of the church. As of the end of the reporting period, this church was able to hold services peacefully.

A group of 200 people attacked Kairos Indonesian Baptist Church (GBI Kairos) in Jakarta during Sunday services on February 14, 2010. Protesters yelled, cursed, and threw stones at the church. No injuries were reported.

Local residents and members of radical groups burned both the Batak Protestant Church building and pastor's residence in Sibuhuan, North Sumatra, on January 22, 2010. The North Sumatra interfaith council of religious leaders publicly condemned the violence and collectively traveled to the site during the following week to show interfaith support for the pastor and congregation.

On December 17, 2009, the Catholic Church of Santo Albertus in Bekasi, West Java, was attacked by a mob of 500 to 600 people. Police intervened and dispersed the crowd.

Members of radical groups attacked and burned a mosque in Bansari, Temanggung, Central Java, that is affiliated with the Indonesian Islamic Dakwah Institution (LDII), a mainstream Islamic organization, on December 6, 2009. The local MUI suggested that LDII move its mosque to another place to prevent future conflict, as the LDII was a minority group in Temanggung.

The Indonesia Bethel Church in Bekasi, West Java, received a bomb threat on October 3, 2009. The following day, the Batak Protestant Church at Jalan Bogor, Jakarta received a bomb threat. Police found no evidence of bombs at either church.

Members of radical Muslim groups confronted the Java Christian Church in Solo during Ramadan in September 2009, because church members served meals for poor Muslims during their fasting month of Ramadan.

Students at the Arastamar Evangelical School of Theology (SETIA), a Christian school, continued to study without a permanent location. In July 2008 Muslim residents in Kampung Pulo, West Jakarta attacked SETIA's permanent facility after residents accused a student of stealing from a local home, although the charge was never substantiated. In response to the violence, local authorities relocated the 1,200 SETIA students who were boarding at the school. The permanent facility remained vacant and locked with school officials reporting some evidence of vandalism. One of the temporary locations was in a privately owned building, whose management evicted 600 students in October 2009. Several other groups of students were evicted from a government-owned building in West Jakarta in the same month, following confrontations with police that resulted in minor injuries to students and police. Under cramped conditions the students lived and studied at two small sites in West Jakarta, creating challenges for holding integrated classes.

On September 10, 2009, religious leaders and communities in Manado, North Sulawesi, asked the government to close the Kemuliaan Allah Foundation and investigate founder Herman Kemala. They claimed Kemala's teaching advocated violence and deviance from Christian doctrine. A video used as evidence showed Kemala slapping his followers. On October 12, 2009, Manado State Court fined Herman Kemala \$32 (300,000 rupiah) for acts of violence but found him not guilty of blasphemy.

In November 2009 the MUI chapter in Malang, East Java, requested that the government prohibit the film 2012. The MUI claimed it was unsuitable to be viewed by Muslims, because only Allah knew when the world would end. Several regional MUI branches and supporters protested the content of the apocalyptic 2012 movie, raided Internet cafes, and burned DVDs of the film.

Dozens of residents from Tawangrejo Village in Madiun (East Java) went to the MUI Chapter in Madiun in November 2009 and reported the "Among Tani" teaching led by Sukarno (one name only) as heresy. The Madiun MUI questioned 19 of the "Among Tani" followers and asked them to discontinue their association with the sect.

Several houses of worship, religious schools, and homes of Muslim groups regarded as unorthodox were attacked, vandalized, forced to shut, or prevented from being established by militant groups and mobs throughout the country. In several cases police temporarily detained members of "deviant groups" who were victims of attacks, ostensibly to ensure their safety, but did not arrest attackers.

Muslims reported occasional difficulties in establishing mosques in Muslim-minority areas of Papua, North Sulawesi, and elsewhere.

Hardline religious groups used pressure, intimidation, or violence against those whose messages or practices offended them. Militants purporting to uphold public morality sometimes attacked cafes and nightclubs they considered venues for prostitution or that had not made payments to extremist groups, although the number of such incidents decreased compared to previous years. Hundreds of activists from a number of hardline Muslim groups disrupted an international lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender conference in Surabaya in March 2010, forcing their way into the hotel hosting the conference. Local police refused to issue a permit to the conference organizers in the face of hardline opposition. The groups then forced the cancellation of the conference by forcing entry and occupying the hotel where the conference was being held.

The Islamic Defenders Front (FPI) conducted vigilante raids on entertainment establishments during Ramadan. FPI members also were involved in a number of violent incidents during the reporting period, including attacks on a reporter and at least three local residents during a raid on a kiosk in Petamburan, Central Jakarta, in May 2010.

In May 2010 hardline groups forced the removal of "Tiga Mojang" statue of three women wearing traditional Sundanese clothing at a housing complex in Bekasi, West Java. A local leader of FPI said the statue violated Islamic values.

Voluntary conversions between religious groups occurred, as allowed by law, but remained a source of controversy. Some Muslims accused Christian groups of using food and microcredit programs as incentives for impoverished Muslims to convert.

In December 2009 in Bandung, West Java, under pressure from a Muslim fundamentalist group, local officials ordered a Christian medical NGO providing free medical treatment to the poor to cease their services after the group accused the NGO of proselytizing.

On April 14, 2010, Jakarta police took control by force of an 18th-century Muslim religious site on disputed land. Hundreds of local residents and Nahdlatul Ulama followers had visited and recited the Qur'an regularly at a tomb on the property. The residents clashed with police, resulting in three deaths, and hundreds of injuries. Government officials ultimately ordered the tomb preserved.

On June 6, 2010, demonstrators gathered outside the Beth Hashem synagogue in Surabaya to protest Israeli government actions related to the Gaza Flotilla. There were no injuries or damage to the synagogue.

Section IV. U.S. Government Policy

The U.S. government discusses religious freedom with the government as part of its overall policy to promote human rights.

On January 25 to 27, 2010, the Indonesian government hosted the first Indonesia-U.S. Interfaith Dialogue under the title "Building Collaborative Communities: Enhancing Cooperation among People of Different Faiths." Delegates included religious leaders, scholars, students, and interfaith activists from the country, the United States, and the region. The event encouraged interfaith action in addressing community needs.

The U.S. embassy and the consulates in Surabaya and Medan regularly engaged government officials on specific religious freedom issues. Embassy staff at all levels met frequently with religious leaders, officials of Muslim social organizations, and human rights advocates to clarify U.S. policy in support of religious freedom, discuss religious tolerance, and promote respect for religion. Embassy staff also met with members of minority religious groups, whose houses of worship or training facilities were forcibly closed, to discuss government response to the closures, as well as religious freedom and pluralism generally.

Embassy and consulate outreach to the public emphasized the importance of religious freedom and tolerance in a democratic and diverse society. The embassy and consulates also promoted pluralism and tolerance through exchanges and civil society programs.

During the reporting period, two six-week academic programs under the Study of the U.S. Institute were conducted on religious pluralism. The programs were designed to enhance participants' appreciation of the principles of religious pluralism in the U.S. through lectures, presentation, panels, and visits to several religious communities. Both programs were hosted by the University of California Santa Barbara and each included one participant from the country. In addition young Muslim leaders travelled to the United States and participated in two State Department-funded International Visitor Leadership Programs on the subject of democracy and multiculturalism.

Five of the embassy's 11 American Corners are in Islamic universities. In academic year 2009-10, 10 of 32 Fulbright English Teaching Assistants (ETAs) from the United States were placed in pesantrens for one-year positions. In academic year 2010-11, 14 of 40 ETAs will be placed in pesantrens.

The embassy and consulates reached a broad audience across the country during the reporting period through the production of media programs that provided in-depth coverage of issues, including religious freedom, from a U.S. perspective. These included several television cooperative productions, which broadcast on major free-to-air television stations.

The embassy supported a number of outreach programs during the month of Ramadan, including a number of iftar dinners reaching a broad cross-section of society.

The embassy and consulates also supported campus seminar programs aimed at strengthening supporters of pluralism on Islamic campuses and reinforcing an understanding of religious freedom, tolerance, pluralism, and gender equity. Five American religious scholars visited the country on an exchange program and held public discussions on several campuses in Jakarta, Lombok, and Malang in cooperation with state Islamic universities and public universities.

The embassy and consulates also engaged with religious figures through an active outreach program. A number of programs at high schools, universities, and Islamic boarding schools (pesantrens) focused on diversity, pluralism, and religious tolerance.

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